Census 2000 Ethnographic Studies

FINAL REPORT

Quality assurance procedures were applied throughout the creation of this report. This topic report integrates findings and provides context and background for interpretation of results from Census 2000 evaluations, tests, and other research undertaken by the U. S. Census Bureau. It is part of a broad program, the Census 2000 Testing, Experimentation, and Evaluation program, designed to assess Census 2000 and to inform 2010 Census planning.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the findings of six ethnographic research projects undertaken in conjunction with the Census 2000 Testing and Experimentation Program. The findings highlighted in this document are of particular relevance to the 2010 decennial census. Ethnographic work has been successful in identifying problems with enumeration in critical populations and in providing qualitative insights into the conditions which create enumeration problems. Some of the key findings from each research project include:

Ethnography on Protecting Privacy

- Privacy reactions are highly situational. Respondents did not use preset categories of private and public facts about themselves. Rather, respondents decided anew whether to answer questions in each venue where they are encountered.

- A descriptive model for understanding how respondents decide whether to divulge information was articulated in the final report. This model includes three main parts: 1) an assessment of the sponsor of the questions; 2) an assessment of whether the questions are relevant to some legitimate purpose of the sponsor, and 3) an assessment of possible consequences, positive and negative, of providing information.

- The model of how respondents decide to reveal information in censuses and surveys was widely shared in all groups but some differences emerged. One difference was between more and less technologically sophisticated respondents – technologically sophisticated respondents were more comfortable with providing information on the Internet than less technologically sophisticated respondents.

- Many respondents believed that all government agencies share data freely. This belief persisted despite any assurances of confidentiality.

Ethnography on Generation X

- While many members of Generation X in this study were alienated from national politics and institutions, they still saw value in the decennial census. While most respondents were familiar with the Census by name, most were unclear about the roles and functions of the decennial census. The lack of knowledge and comprehension about the decennial census among respondents in this study suggests that this in itself may be a contributing factor for decennial census noncompliance among young adult respondents.

- Skepticism and mistrust toward the government is pervasive among this group of respondents. Respondents' past experiences and interactions with federal bureaucracies influence their overall negative attitudes toward the government and its sponsored civic initiatives. Although respondents in this study possess unfavorable attitudes toward the government, derogatory views were not extended toward the Census Bureau. Respondents were still willing to comply with decennial enumeration efforts because they believe the social importance and benefits of the decennial census outweigh distrustful attitudes held toward the government.

Ethnography on Selected Mobile Populations

- Across four distinct socio-cultural groups (youth gangs, urban American Indians, Irish Travelers, and seasonal residents in the Sunbelt) many common barriers to enumeration were found. These include residential mobility, distrust and/or fear of non-group members, irregular[1] and complex household arrangements[2], and disinterest or apathy with respect to civic matters.

- The fact that similar enumeration barriers were identified by both the 1990 studies and the current research shows the persistence of very challenging problems. It's encouraging that similar processes vis-a-vis census taking appear to be present across a variety of hard-to-enumerate populations because addressing a given barrier to enumeration will likely have an impact across population groups. It is somewhat perplexing that measures taken to address the barriers identified in the 1990 Census appear to have not fully addressed the circumstances encountered in Census 2000 by the four distinct mobile community groups in this study.

Ethnography on Complex Households

- A clear and strong finding from this research is that there are conceptual differences in the definition and application of the key concept "household" articulated on the census form and the way in which some respondents view the composition of their household and view the interrelationships of its members.

[1] Irregular housing refers to housing units that have one or more of the following characteristics: (a) hidden from public view, usually in back yards or down rural roads, (b) illegally built usually in single family homes or garages, (c) do not have clear unit designators such as apartment number or any other clear marker such as house number in rural areas, or (d) are in areas where the condition and number of units in buildings vary inconsistently. (de la Puente, 1993, page 11).

[2] In general, complex households have one or more of the following features: (a) unrelated individuals, (b) mobile or ambiguous household members, (c) households formed for the sole purpose of sharing the rent and/or other living expenses or (d) households that contain two or more "nuclear" families. (de la Puente, 1993, page 3).

- There are cultural, linguistic, and nationality differences with census concepts, methods, and procedures and respondents' understanding of these areas. Examples from this study include: 1) Latino naming customs that may require more space to write fully than is provided on the census form and may potentially lead to understating of undercoverage; 2) "foster child" and "adopted child" are culture-bound relationship terms embedded in specific U.S. socio-legal institutions that do not exist in the countries of origin of some of the Latino and Korean immigrants in this study, leading to respondent confusion and misreporting; More attention is needed toward addressing these differences in the development of census data collection instruments and operational procedures.

Ethnography on Social Network Tracing

- Most of the habitually mobile who were found enumerated - no matter how often or how far they went away - were traced through repeated returns to the same set of sedentary co-residents(s).

- Mobility impacts mechanisms of omissions at both the individual person level and the household level. In the intensively researched social networks traced in this study, more habitually mobile people were omitted than were enumerated in Census 2000.

Ethnography on Colonias

- Ethnographers from all four colonias or sites identified and documented the presence of four major barriers to census enumeration. These are: irregular housing, little or no knowledge of English and limited formal education, concerns regarding confidentiality, and complex and fluid households.

- However, the extent to which these barriers posed problems for Census 2000 and the Census Bureau's success in dealing with these four obstacles varied across the four sites.

- Although colonias on the U.S./Mexico border are, for the most part, ethnically homogeneous, there is consensus among ethnographers that it is inappropriate to assume the same degree of homogeneity on other key dimensions, such as language, the extent of social cohesion (i.e., community) among colonia residents and the level of infrastructure development. Therefore, decennial census enumeration efforts should not subscribe to a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the findings from six ethnographic research projects undertaken during fiscal year 2000 and funded as part of the Census 2000 Testing and Experimentation Program to improve coverage of selected segments of this nation's population. This document discusses ethnographic research projects that address wide-ranging enumeration challenges with the decennial census, including but not limited to: respondent sensitivities to issues of privacy; cultural and social beliefs that influence decennial census compliance as a civic quest; increased numbers of foreign-born persons and undocumented immigrants; increased diversity in household type and housing arrangements; and understanding the behavior patterns of selected mobile populations.

It is important to note that three of the ethnographic research initiatives covered in this report, Protecting Privacy by Gerber, Generation X by Crowley and Colonias by de la Puente, were exploratory research studies that addressed specific decennial enumeration concerns and specific cultural, social and demographic changes in community groups during the last decade. These three ethnographic studies did not gather data about census outcome (i.e. whether respondents provided housing information and etc.) in conjunction with Census 2000. Two of the ethnographic projects, Complex Households by Schwede and Mobile Populations by Salo, were also exploratory research, but with access to census outcome data. One project, Ethnographic Social Network Tracing by Brownrigg, did compare and interpret census outcome data using ethnographic techniques as a planned evaluation for Census 2000.

Key research questions for each of the six ethnographic research topics included:

- How do beliefs and behaviors surrounding the privacy of personal information affect survey response, particularly in groups with historic mistrust of government? (Protecting Privacy Ethnographic Research by Gerber)

- Do generational patterns of civic engagement or disengagement in the Generation-X birth cohort affect the likelihood of their participation in the decennial census? (Generation X Ethnographic Research by Crowley)

- How well do current census categories for household relationships capture the diversity and complexity of household structures in selected ethnic/social populations? (Complex Households and Relationships Ethnographic Research by Schwede)

- What are the characteristics and behavioral practices of selected highly mobile populations that make them difficult to enumerate? (Mobile Populations Ethnographic Research by Salo)

- What are the major barriers to census enumeration in colonias and how were these

barriers addressed in Census 2000? (Colonias Ethnographic Research by de la Puente)

- At which of their domiciles are highly mobile people enumerated in the census or other surveys? Can people be more reliably identified from their position in networks computed from their interactions with others than by comparing sets of address and person records? (Ethnographic Social Network Tracing by Brownrigg)

This document describes six research projects where the fieldwork was conducted using more than 30 purchase order contracts in conjunction with Census 2000. These research projects applied ethnographic methods designed and led by staff in the Statistical Research Division (SRD). The full reports for each of these research studies provides useful and practical information as well as recommendations for testing in the 2010 Census testing cycle. Each ethnographic study is also designed to expand our basic understanding of social trends and processes, which affect the conduct of the decennial census.

1.1 Ethnographic Research at the Census Bureau

1.1.1 Ethnography Prior to 1990

Ethnographic research is not new to the Census Bureau. The Census Bureau used ethnographic techniques to study survey coverage as early as 1971 (Valentine and Valentine, 1971). The Panel on Decennial Census Methodology, established by the Census Bureau in 1984, recommended that the Census Bureau undertake a series of participant observation coverage studies with expert observers in selected areas. Exploratory ethnographic research was initiated in a number of communities in order to identify and explain the complex behavioral processes that lead to underenumeration. This research identified barriers to enumeration in defined, distinct sociocultural groups to suggest general hypotheses and make recommendations for coverage measurement. The approach adopted by the Census Bureau was to contract with experienced ethnographers to conduct independent research.

1.1.2 Ethnography in the 1990 Census

Based on the experience obtained in preliminary research, the Census Bureau launched its most ambitious phase of ethnographic studies associated with the 1990 Census. This set of studies consisted of 29 sites nationwide and was known as the Ethnographic Evaluation of the Behavioral Causes of Census Undercount. This research revealed that omissions and erroneous enumeration occurred due to one or more of the following conditions:[3]

Residential Mobility

[3] For a complete summary of findings from the research conducted in these 29 sites see de la Puente (1993).

Language and illiteracy barriers
Concealment to protect resources
Irregular housing and household arrangements
Resistance, passive or active, as a strategy for dealing with outsiders, especially government (Brownrigg and Martin, Study Plan 1989).

1.1.3 Ethnographic Research Post 1990

After the 1990 Census, but prior to Census 2000, additional research was carried out which further explored or extended the themes stressed in the Ethnographic Evaluation of the Behavioral Causes of Undercount. These include:

- The Living Situation Survey examined mobility and complex living situations; The Cognitive Study of Living Situations examined the residence concepts and reactions to complex living situations;
- Ethnographic work on migrant labor camps led to recommendations for enumerating this population;
- Challenges in the enumeration of American Indians living in urban areas is the subject of ongoing fieldwork;
- An ethnographic project examining privacy concerns, called "Protecting Privacy: The Ethnography of Personal Information Management" is currently in the field.

More than 20 additional exploratory and ethnographic studies and evaluations have been conducted on a wide range of socio-cultural groups-such as the homeless, migrant workers, African Americans, Latinos, American Indians, and Asians--and issues such as respondents' understanding of census language and concepts, and other types of communications. Qualitative studies provide insight and richness of detail which are not available in using other methodologies. Ethnographic research often has broad explanatory power which supplements and contextualizes quantitative data.

While it is not possible to directly link prior Census ethnographic studies to innovations for Census 2000, many of the problems that were identified have been regarded as major areas for improvement in Census procedures. Thus, previous ethnographic research has helped to build a foundation for developing many innovations which became part of the plans for Census 2000. For example, the ethnographers' emphasis on language barriers is part of the background for producing the census form in more languages. Ethnographers also stressed the importance of the early participation of knowledgeable locals in order to improve address listing; current procedures take this into account to a greater degree than did 1990's procedures. The main recommendation of the ethnographers with respect to issues of resistance was to involve local organizations and enumerators from the same communities as the respondents in the census process. The Census' current extensive partnership program may reflect this emphasis. Insights into mobility and household arrangements have also aided in the review of decennial residence rules.

1.1.4 Ethnography in Census 2000

The research summarized in this report is part of a larger program of ethnographic research, known as Ethnography for the New Millennium, carried out in conjunction with Census 2000. These research studies were conducted, in part, as a result of suggestions offered by Census Bureau advisory committees. Prior experience with ethnographic research served to inform and guide the formulation of research questions examined by the Census 2000 ethnographies discussed in this report. The issues addressed in each of the Census 2000 ethnographies represent an increasing sensitivity to diversity in attitudes and lifestyles. Just as past ethnographic studies have improved outreach to undercounted groups, it is expected that findings from ethnographic research conducted in Census 2000 will have benefits for the 2010 Census.

1.2 Overview of Report

In this report, information on the methods used to gather the information and produce the findings summarized in this report are discussed first. This is followed by a brief section on the limitations of the ethnographic approach. A summary of results by research project follows. And lastly, concluding comments and recommendations are then provided.

2. METHODS

The data collection methods employed by the studies described in this document have been used previously to shed light on census and survey processes with much success.[4] These methods include in-depth interviewing, debriefings, focus groups, participant observation and other appropriate methodologies.

The research described below was led by social scientists in the Statistical Research Division (SRD) with expertise in ethnographic research. Sole source purchase orders or contracts were issued to social scientists outside the Census Bureau who have special and unique knowledge of specific population groups and geographic areas, or expertise in particular subject areas. The bulk of the fieldwork was conducted by these social scientists under the direction of Census Bureau social scientists. This model has been used by the Census Bureau in the past with very successful results.

2.1 Protecting Privacy

2.1.1 Aims of the Research

The aim of this research was to examine the effects of respondents' concerns about privacy and their participation in Census 2000 and demographic surveys. Findings indicate that a number of key factors affect the public's response to requests for information in government surveys, including personal experience, cultural value systems, and self-interested or self-protective responses to social circumstances. Respondents' expectations are formed through experiences with all data collectors and all modes: school forms, job applications, magazine 'surveys,' phone calls from marketers and the like. This research also indicates that respondents absorb potent images of privacy at risk in fictional accounts and news stories.

The main goal for undertaking this ethnography was to create a preliminary sketch of the context in which respondents participate in government sponsored data collection efforts and to locate respondents' reactions to government surveys within it. To accomplish this the focus of the research was on the decision to provide (or to refuse to provide) information about oneself or one's family; how this decision is constructed, what factors are taken into account, and what other concerns or ideas are evoked in considering this decision.

[4] Qualitative studies, conducted in conjunction with the 1980 and 1990 censuses relied on observation of certain geographically defined communities (e.g., Aschenbrenner, 1991; Bell, 1991; and Bunte, 1992). Other ethnographically based techniques are relevant to the broader range of studies described in this document (e.g., Gerber, 1994).

It should be noted that the aim of the ethnography on privacy was not to account for all reasons why respondents refuse surveys or survey questions. During the course of in-depth interviews respondents offered information about non-privacy related reasons for refusing to participate in surveys, including time constraints, questionnaire difficulty and the like, but these reasons were not the focus of the research.

2.1.2 Methodology

This ethnography addressed issues of privacy and confidentiality of interest to the decennial census. A total of 81 interviews were conducted from May 2000 through August 2000 with respondents recruited by local organizations and by other contacts. Respondents included 10 non-Hispanic white, 15 African American, 17 American Indian, 14 Asian, 20 Hispanic, and 5 respondents identifying themselves with more than one race.

Recruitment occurred through a wide variety of citizen or social service groups, some of which had served as Partnership Groups in the decennial census. In addition, an ethnographer with ties to a Native American group in Oakland, California arranged interviews in that community. Personal contacts were used to identify respondents who could be considered technologically sophisticated. In-depth interviews were carried out at numerous locations, including Washington DC, Chicago, San Diego, Los Angeles, Oakland, Miami, and Northern Virginia.

Semi-structured research protocols were designed to be administered by a team of ethnographers. The interview used flexible probes. The topics included debriefing about Census 2000 and Current Population Survey participation, experiences with other data collections, privacy attitudes, and a series of vignettes. These vignettes served to expand the set of circumstances under discussion to include things of particular interest to the research. The main aim of these vignettes was to elicit the reasoning processes, which respondents applied to the decisions faced by the central character in the vignette. Thus, the Internet, revealing information over the telephone, proxying issues, risks associated with giving information, and issues of information sharing and the belief in assurances of confidentiality were suggested by the circumstances of these vignettes.

2.2 Generation X

2.2.1 Aims of Research

The aim of the Generation-X ethnography was to examine the attitudes of young persons in the birth cohort known as Generation-X towards participation in decennial censuses and surveys.[5]

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[5] For the purpose of this study, Generation X is defined as persons aged 21to 32, that is, respondents born during the years 1968-1979. Various studies define Generation X differently by age, with some analyses categorizing persons born in 1961 as the cohorts oldest members, while others use a younger upper boundary to demarcate the age group (Craig and Earl Bennett 1997). Only in hindsight will the boundaries for this cohort become clearer.

On-going ethnographic research clearly shows that a primary reason respondents participate in government-sponsored survey requests is that they feel it is their civic duty to do so as good citizens (see Gerber, Crowley, and Trencher 1999.) This research examined this potential motivation for participation in the census and surveys, in the context of Generation-X. Therefore, the central research question of the proposed research is: Does Generation X view participation in decennial censuses and government surveys as time-worthy civic duties?

For the purpose of this study, Generation X is defined as persons aged 21 to 32, that is, respondents born during the years 1968-1979. Participants of this study were drawn from "hard to reach" respondent populations, such as ethnic minorities, lower socioeconomic classes, immigrants and alienated young adults who are all members of the birth cohort Generation X.

Civic engagement was defined in this research in terms of a wide variety of activities such as voting, volunteering at soup kitchens, joining political advocacy groups, undertaking leadership roles in community church programs, helping Alzheimer's patients, and the like. Experience with such activities may have an influence on attitudes towards participating in government-sponsored surveys like the decennial census.

The wider Generation X populace, according to past studies (Cheung 1995; Halstead 1992; Holtz 1995), tends to be apathetic about community and political involvement and disillusioned with government. If Generation X respondents in this study share such attitudes as their wider Generation X counterparts do, then the Census Bureau will face another major obstacle in reaching out to them. This apathy and disillusionment with government will also compound existing enumeration barriers identified by past ethnographic research (de la Puente 1993; U.S. Census Bureau 1999) and may have short and long term implications for survey nonresponse issues, undercoverage challenges, privacy and confidentiality concerns and effective outreach campaigns.

2.2.2 Methodology

This ethnography consisted of 150 semi-structured, individual ethnographic interviews, ten focus groups, a paper-and-pencil survey and participant observation activities in diverse settings such as American Indian Pow Wow ceremonies, coffee bars, community demonstrations, class rooms, pool halls, job sites and bowling alleys. Research was conducted and completed during March 2000 through February 2001. Interviews were conducted in Oregon, Illinois, Florida, Texas, Maryland, Virginia and Washington, DC. Recruitment for this research was nonrandom, and primarily by means of snowball sampling. Recruitment targeted 25 African Americans, 14 first-generation Afro-Caribbean Immigrants (Haitian and Jamaican), 20 American Indians (on and off reservations), 19 Southeast Asians (Cambodian, Laotian, Vietnamese), 59 Hispanics (Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican and Nicaraguan) and 13 non-Hispanic White Americans. Respondents were primarily working class adults with levels of education that ranged from high school dropouts to those in pursuit of PhDs. Respondents recruited also included documented and undocumented immigrants residing in the United States. Ethnographic interviews generally spanned two hours per respondent.

The principal researcher designed a semi-structured questionnaire protocol, which was further developed in consultation with five contract ethnographers who also served as interviewers for this research. Each ethnographer was an experienced social scientist with extensive training in qualitative research methods**.** The protocol used to guide the interviews was inclusive in order to tap into the personal life narratives and decisions of respondents from diverse racial, ethnic, citizenship, class and educational backgrounds. The topics covered in these interviews were the respondents' civic interests, activism and causes, as well as government participation. A card sort activity was used. Ten focus groups to explore the respondents' definitions and understandings about civic engagement were also conducted.

In addition, respondents were asked to complete a questionnaire, in which the respondent was instructed to indicate whether he/she "strongly agrees, agrees, neither agrees or disagrees, disagrees, or strongly disagrees" to 16 statements which represent ideas about the way relationships between people, society and government could be.

2.3 Mobile Populations

2.3.1 Aims of the Research

Ethnographic research on mobile populations consisted of four independent research projects. Each project or study focused on a specific mobile subgroup. The general goals of each of these four research projects were to outline patterns of and causes for residential mobility among selected highly mobile groups, to observe these transient groups during the conduct of Census 2000, and to provide recommendations for improving the enumeration of transient populations in 2010 Census.

Four distinct subpopulations were examined. These were: American Indians residing in urban parts of the San Francisco Bay Area, gang members in the Midwest, Irish Travelers in Georgia and Mississippi, and "snowbirds" traveling in recreational vehicles in the Sunbelt states. Across these four distinct populations, many common barriers to enumeration were found. Many of these barriers have been studied and documented in previous ethnographic studies of hard-to-enumerate populations (see de la Puente, 1993).

The fact that similar enumeration barriers were identified by both the 1990 studies and the current research shows the persistence of very challenging problems. It's encouraging that similar processes vis-a-vis census taking appear to be present across a variety of hard-to-enumerate populations because addressing a given barrier to enumeration will likely have an impact across population groups. It is somewhat disappointing from the standpoint that measures taken to address the barriers identified in the 1990 Census appear to have not fully addressed the circumstances encountered in Census 2000 by the four mobile populations that were the focus of this ethnography.

The ethnographic fieldwork on mobile populations was conducted by social scientists who had extensive knowledge of a specific socio-cultural group. Each researcher had previously conducted research within his/her population of interest and was known, in most cases, as a trusted individual by the community. This is important because many of these groups of transient people are notoriously untrusting of outsiders, so the aid of researchers who are known and trusted within the community is crucial to obtain the true attitudes of the group members.

2.3.2 Methodology

The ethnographic fieldwork took place before, during and after Census 2000 in order to evaluate the lifestyles of the groups and to observe residential mobility activities during these time periods. All researchers used a combination of observation and unstructured interviews in their evaluations. Each ethnographer created his or her own protocol for interviewing, which varied depending on the nature of the population.

The first ethnographic study was of gang members in two urban sites. Gang members pose several problems to enumeration. They often do not have a place of their own; frequently, they stay with a variety of people including friends, family and other gang members. They also have a strong aversion to the government that makes gaining their cooperation with the census very difficult. The ethnographer conducted extensive community-based participation-observations along with a set of semi-structured interviews with a total of 59 male gang members and 17 female members of the gang milieu.

The second ethnographic study focused on Mississippi and Georgia Irish Travelers from the south. Irish Travelers were historically nomadic people who have more recently settled, to some extent, into permanent communities. Their amount of itinerancy and their level of secrecy have made them a difficult-to-enumerate group. Moreover, much like gang members, Irish Travelers are typically engaged in unconventional activities, thus increasing their suspicion of non-community members and institutions such as government. In Mississippi, there were approximately 260 trailers of Irish Traveler families that were observed. With the cooperation of school officials and her trust from the Traveler families due to her past research within the community, the ethnographer was able to conduct extensive personal interviews with 49 families.

The third ethnographic study investigated a group of Arizona Snowbirds. These are seasonal residents in the Sunbelt who are known for their mobility. Typically, they travel and camp during the winter months in the southwestern United States. Most have a permanent place of residence that they return to during the rest of the year, but some do travel year-round in RVs. Seasonal residents were selected because historically this group has presented the Census Bureau with challenges. Not only do their multiple residences present a challenge but establishing residency status between living locations according to census residence rules can also be problematic. The ethnographer's research included observations and semi structured interviews with 32 Snowbirds on five federal public campgrounds that were used as RV sites in Arizona.

The focus of the fourth and last ethnographic study was American Indians living in the urban sections of the San Francisco Bay area. Their households are often fluid in composition and many suffer, at least temporarily, from homelessness. Other members of the community choose to live a mobile life either for work or pleasure. This group is highlighted because very little is known about the residence patterns of urban American Indians mainly because, unlike their counterparts on Indian reservations, urban American Indians tend not to be geographically concentrated. The ethnographer interviewed 27 highly mobile American Indian people and observed many members of the large Indian community.

2.4 Complex Households and Relationships

2.4.1 Aims of the Research

The Complex Households Project had three aims. The first aim was to explore the range and functioning of complex households in ethnic groups in the United States, falling into five of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) race and ethnic categories mandated for federal surveys: African American, American Indian/Alaska Native (Navajos and Inupiaq Eskimos), Asian (immigrant Koreans), whites, and Latinos. We had hoped to include a study of Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, but could find no expert ethnographer already embedded in a community who was available to conduct the study in the spring of 2000. The second aim was to examine how well current census categories for household relationships capture the diversity and complexity of household structures in selected ethnic/social populations. The third aim was to assess how well census methods, questions, relationship categories and household composition typologies describe the emerging diversity of household types.

2.4.2 Methodology

This project consisted of an integrated set of small-scale ethnographic studies of complex households in six race/ethnic groups, using the same methods and the same core questions at the same time in the spring of 2000. The purposes were to learn more about the range and functioning of complex households in different race/ethnic groups, to examine how well the relationship question captured the diversity of household types and to assess how well census methods, procedures, and household composition types reflected this diversity. Experienced ethnographers already immersed in six different race/ethnic communities were chosen to conduct studies for this project in the following communities: Navajos on the reservation (Tongue 2000, 2000a), Inupiaq Eskimo in northern Alaska (Craver 2001, 2001a), African Americans in southeastern Virginia (Holmes 2002, 2002a), rural whites in western New York state (Hewner 2000, 2000a), Korean immigrants in Queens, New York (Kang 2001, 2001a), and Latino immigrants in Central Virginia (Blumberg and Goerman 2000, 2000a).

Each ethnographer selected 25 complex households that he/she felt represented the range of complex households within his/her ethnic group and conducted interviews between May and July

of 2000, as soon after Census Day (April 1, 2000) as possible without adversely affecting the ongoing nonresponse followup operation. At the beginning of the interview, the ethnographers asked each respondent to complete a mock census form and observed how he/she completed it, noting in particular how the respondent handled and reacted to the relationship question (Korean and Latino immigrants were given census forms in their own languages). The ethnographers then conducted semi-structured interviews, using a core protocol developed by Census Bureau project staff that included: questions on demographic characteristics, coverage probes to identify potential omissions and erroneous enumerations, and open-ended questions on living situations and mobility patterns. The ethnographers also used a special relationship grid modeled after the SIPP relationship grid to record the interrelationships of all persons in the household. By comparing the detailed interrelationships collected on the grid with the limited relationships on the respondent-filled census form, we were able to identify household relationships and household types masked by the census method of asking for relationships to Person One only.

2.5 Social Network Tracing

2.5.1 Aims of the Research

In order to learn more about how residential mobility impacts census coverage, the Ethnographic Social Network Tracing Project researched social networks which include highly mobile people. Highly mobile people were defined as people who make residential moves more often than most people in the United States or who habitually migrate among domiciles. Social networks were formally defined and modeled by observing people interact over a six-month period. Researchers traced participants interacting in the social networks to the addresses and locations of their domiciles and reported the identities and characteristics of participants, sets of co-residents, and the domiciles they occupied.

This evaluation applied social network methods to structure ethnographic observations used to evaluate census coverage, categories, and processes. Ethnographic alternative enumerations of small areas were used to evaluate census coverage in the 1986 Los Angeles test, 1988 Dress Rehearsal, and the Ethnographic Evaluations of the Behavioral Causes of Undercount in the 1990 Decennial Census. These projects developed methods for ethnographic fieldwork, reporting, linkage/matching, and analysis to compare Alternative Enumerations with official census results. The prior ethnographic evaluations provided concrete evidence to support the underlying reasons posited to explain why people are omitted in the census. In predetermined areas, however, the behavior of mobility could only be observed as people moving in or moving out.

The ethnographic social network tracing adopted a proactive approach in order to learn more about how moves among places and co-residents affect the coverage of Census 2000. The research focused on highly mobile people and documented their moves. More automated methods to search and match addresses and locations on the Master Address File and TIGER maps and the data capture of write-ins (including names) in Census 2000 made it feasible to

move out of preset areas to trace people anywhere in the United States. The approach of framing domains of interaction and defining social networks of people who know each other is compatible with ethnographic research in complex societies.

2.5.2 Methodology

Ethnographers conducted six social network tracing studies in different regions of the country. Each ethnographer selected an interaction which involved highly mobile people. Participants in the separate social networks were 1) survival or recreational campers in the Northwest (Southard 2001), 2) seasonal workers living in a dorm their employer provided (Murray 2001), 3) Mexican former migrant farm workers and their families settling in the Midwest (Chavira-Prado 2001), 4) older Haitian seasonal and migrant farm workers in the South (Marcelin and Marcelin 2001), 5) commercial fishermen or their entourage (Kitner 2001), and 6) the local chapter of an American Indian men's society (Gilley 2001). The ethnographers identified and characterized participants and traced their moves among domiciles and sets of co-residents. The people traced "nominated" themselves by participating face-to-face in social networks. Tracing began before Census Day, verified individuals' correct census residence, and continued for six months. The ethnographers reported which participants interacted with each other, the addresses, locations, and types of domiciles they occupied, and identified and characterized their co-residents. In the cases of participants who joined interactions late or who appeared and disappeared quickly, ethnographers were limited by how participants described their domiciles and residential situations.

The domiciles reported were located in Census geography and on the Master Address File. Census person records collected in and around these domiciles were extracted from Census 2000 files. Census records collected at and near the domiciles where participants were traced were examined to find records matching participants or their reported co-residents. The combined total of the participants in the six social networks and their reported co-residents searched in Census 2000 records was 245: 42.4 percent were sedentary (without any reported residential moves), 21.2 percent were incidentally "residentially mobile" (having moved at least once but not routinely) and 36.3 percent were habitually mobile (frequently changing domiciles as a matter of routine lifestyle).

2.6 Enumeration Barriers in Colonias

2.6.1 Aims of the Research

The aim of the colonia ethnography is to provide qualitative information on how Census 2000 was conducted in selected colonias. This information comes from two sources. The first source is four ethnographic studies conducted by ethnographers with fieldwork experience in colonias and with knowledge of these settlements working under contract for the Census Bureau. The second data source is focus groups with census enumerators and crew leaders who worked in the

selected colonias studied by the ethnographers. These focus groups were conducted by staff from the Statistical Research Division (SRD) and the Planning, Research and Evaluation Division (PRED).

2.6.2 Methodology

Colonias are generally unincorporated and low income residential subdivisions, lacking basic infrastructure and services along the border between the U.S. and Mexico. These settlements have been in existence for decades, but the exodus of the poor to colonias began in full force during the 1980s and 1990s (Chapa and del Pinal, 1993). The low cost of land in colonias provided opportunities for home ownership and relief from higher housing costs in border cities such as El Paso and Brownsville.

The ethnographic study of colonias relied on data provided by experienced ethnographers in their field reports to identify and describe barriers to the census enumeration of colonia residents. The research also relied on the views and opinions regarding the conduct of Census 2000 obtained from census enumerators and crew leaders whose assignment areas included one of the four colonias studied by the ethnographers. This information was collected through focus groups conducted by staff from the Statistical Research Division and the Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division.

A total of four ethnographic studies (Campbell 2001; Coronado and Earle, 2001, Du Bry and Palerm, 2001; and Velez-Ibanez and Nunez, 2001) were conducted during Census 2000. Each study focused on one colonia which we refer to as sites in this report. Two sites were situated in Dona Ana County in New Mexico, one site was located in El Paso County, Texas and the fourth and last site was situated in Riverside County, California.

These four ethnographic studies were conducted in order to better understand the barriers to census enumeration in the selected colonias. This information was obtained by professional ethnographers through unobtrusive observation, ethnographic interviews and focus groups with community residents. The ethnographic studies identified four major barriers to census 2000 in the four sites. These are: irregular housing, little or no knowledge of English and limited formal education, concerns regarding confidentiality, and complex and fluid households (including residential mobility).

To obtain a more balanced and complete picture of how Census 2000 was conducted in the four sites or colonias , Census Bureau staff traveled to the local census offices (LCOs) in Riverside County, California, Dona Ana County, New Mexico, and El Paso County, Texas and conducted a total of nine focus groups with census enumerators, four focus groups with crew leaders and crew leader assistants, and two focus groups with cultural facilitators during the summer of 2000. In

all, over 50 enumerators, more than 20 crew leaders and crew leader assistants, and about 10 cultural facilitators participated in these focus groups. The major objective of these focus groups was to obtain the views and opinions of census enumerators and crew leaders on how Census 2000 was conducted in the four sites.

3. LIMITATIONS

Conclusions based on these findings are intended to describe a range of beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, and not to estimate with accuracy the frequency of any of the beliefs, attitudes or behaviors which are discussed. Findings from ethnographic research summarized in this Topic Report are not based on a statistical sample and not generalizable to any larger population. Our choice of respondents was purposive: respondents were chosen to investigate important social processes of theoretical interest to the various research projects.

4. RESULTS

This section identifies in detail the findings for each of the six ethnographic studies. More detailed findings can be found in the Final Reports.[6]

4.1 Protecting Privacy

Key Findings

Privacy reactions are highly situational. Respondents did not use preset categories of private and public facts about themselves. Rather, respondents decided anew whether to answer questions in each venue where they are encountered. Items that are highly protected in one venue may not be in another. For example, respondents make distinctions between what they will tell particular survey sponsors, on the basis of what information they consider that sponsor has the "right" to know.

A descriptive model for understanding how respondents decide whether to divulge information was created**.** This model includes three main parts: First, an assessment of the sponsor of the questions. When respondents are asked to give data, they first must decide if they approve of the sponsor. They do this on the basis of prior experience; what they know or think they know about an organization or agency is brought to bear on the decision. On occasion, they reason from the title of the group. On the whole, respondents preferred governmental to commercial sponsors, with the exception of certain government agencies which control negative consequences. Respondents were also aware that sponsorship may be misrepresented; thus, the authenticity of the data collection is an issue for respondents. This makes telephone mode interviews highly unpopular, because it is impossible to be sure of a caller's true identity.

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[6] These reports are as follows: For Privacy, see Eleanor Gerber, Privacy Schemas and Data Collection: An Ethnographic Account. Census 2000 Ethnographic Studies (Final). February 10, 2003. For Generation-X, see Melinda Crowley, Generation X Speaks Out on Civic Engagement and the Decennial Census: An Ethnographic Approach. Census 2000 Ethnographic Studies (Final). June 17, 2003. For Highly Mobile Populations, see Manuel de la Puente, Jenny Hunter, and Matt Salo, Comparative Ethnographic Research on Mobile Populations. Census 2000 Evaluation J.3.: Ethnographic Studies (Final). July 17, 2003. For Complex Households, see Laurie Schwede, Complex Households and Relationships in the Decennial Census and in Ethnographic Studies of Six Race/Ethnic Groups. Census 2000 Ethnographic Studies (Final). August 27, 2003. For Social Network Tracing, see Leslie A. Brownrigg, Ethnographic Social Network Tracing of Highly Mobile People. Census 2000 Ethnographic Studies (Final). October 16, 2003.And for Colonias, see Manuel de la Puente and David Stemper, The Enumeration of Colonias in Census 2000: Perspectives of Ethnographers and Census Enumerators. Census 2000 Evaluation J.4: Ethnographic Studies (Final). September 22, 2003.

The second part in the descriptive model for understanding how respondents decide whether to divulge information is an assessment of whether the questions are relevant to some legitimate purpose of the sponsor. On the basis of what they know or are told about the purpose of the data collection, respondents form an impression of what kind of questions are relevant to the purpose. Any questions which are not seen as relevant may be treated as "intrusive." For example, in a product survey, respondents can see the manufacturers stake in questions about the functioning of a product they have purchased. Responding to additional questions about the respondents' home, family or habits are likely to be resisted.

Third, respondents assess possible consequences, both positive and negative, of providing information. Respondents were highly protective of information that they believe can cause them harm. In general, respondents protected all financial information (such as bank accounts or credit card numbers) and other information that is seen as leading to individual identification of assets. Social security number is one such protected item. However, some respondents believed that it is generally available within government and therefore do not protect Social Security number for government questionnaires.

Respondents were concerned about government agencies which control negative consequences, such as police agencies, the Internal Revenue Service, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and for American Indian respondents, the Bureau of Indian Affairs. These agencies were not seen as benign. This concern was particularly potent among groups which have historically mistrusted the Federal Government such as American Indians.

Respondents noted concerns with the benefits that may accrue to themselves or their communities by providing information. On a personal level, all respondents were familiar with exchanging information to receive particular benefits, for example, providing information to lenders or to social service agencies in order to receive services**.** The belief that one has no choice but to provide this information was widely held by respondents.

Respondents were motivated by altruistic benefits, such as providing information to the decennial census to enable services for a local area. Some saw participation in surveys and censuses as a way of bringing a group or a point of view greater attention. This is called "having one's voice heard." This was a powerful motivation for Latinos and American Indians to participate in the census.

Many respondents believed that all government agencies share data freely. This belief persisted despite any assurances of confidentiality. Such assurances may be met with unveiled skepticism, or may be interpreted as inherently conditional. That is, many respondents maintained that promises of confidentiality are intended to apply only in normal situations or for lower level employees. Not everyone who believes that data are shared by government agencies thinks this is inappropriate or wrong. However, for those respondents who have something to hide, the belief in widespread data sharing becomes a reason to refuse to give information or to alter the response given to a less problematic one.

The aforementioned account of how respondents decide to reveal information in censuses and surveys was widely shared among respondents but some differences emerged. One difference was between more and less technologically sophisticated respondents. Technologically sophisticated respondents were more comfortable with providing information on the Internet, and felt more able to deal with any potential problems that might occur. Simultaneously, however, such respondents often did not believe that it was possible for any institution to completely assure privacy or confidentiality to persons providing information. Differences in privacy sensitivities also emerged for groups which have had negative experiences with particular agencies of government such as American Indians and foreign-born individuals who reside in the U.S. without the appropriate documentation.

4.2 Generation X

Key Findings

The respondents involved in this research were especially unlikely to be involved in what might be called traditional community engagement areas, such as formal organizations and political activities. By and large, our research data reveal that respondents demonstrate their civic seriousness in large numbers through four different patterns of civic engagement: 1) via *local volunteer associations*; 2) via *local, non-political networks*; 3) via *informal, low-key activities*; and 4) via *unconventional forms of activism.*

When respondents were asked to explain *why* community involvement was important to them, several GenXers mentioned that it was about *community empowerment.* It was also important for many respondents to maintain a bond or tie with their community so they could continue to be a positive force, *role model* or *advocate* to those currently living in or near their community. For the majority of respondents, getting involved in the community was about *giving back to the community*, it's about making the connection between one's personal values and larger systemic concerns or issues.

The decennial census is an easy way in which a generation can give back to the community while empowering the community. The decennial census can also serve as a vehicle by which some GenXers can "have their voices heard." The Census is a non-partisan, legislative, national resource that tells politicians, policy makers, government agencies, community organizations and businesses the resources a community has and the resources a community needs.

This research also indicated that, among Generation X respondents, individuals with an insecure immigration status were much less likely to trust the government and specifically less likely to fill out the Census questionnaire. Undocumented immigrants have long been a concern for the Census Bureau. This research demonstrated that respondents with irregular immigration statuses are unlikely to directly cooperate with the Census. Only one

undocumented immigrant in the study was willing to be counted while she resided with her uncle who is a legal resident. On the other hand, another respondent, who did have legal status as a student, was afraid to participate in the Census because she feared that some time in the future she may go out of status and that the information she provided to the Census might be used to track her down. However, based on this research it appears that Immigrant-centered community-based organizations could be important conduits that attract distrustful and growing undocumented populations.

This research indicates that skepticism and mistrust towards the government is pervasive among the Generation X respondents in the study. In-depth interviews revealed that respondents past experiences and interactions with federal bureaucracies do influence their overall attitudes towards the government. Although respondents in this study maintained unfavorable attitudes towards the government, derogatory views were not extended towards the Census Bureau. Respondents were still willing to comply with decennial enumeration efforts because they believe the social importance and benefits of the Census outweigh distrustful attitudes held towards the government.

While many members of Generation X in this study were alienated from national politics and institutions, they still saw value in the decennial census. While most respondents were familiar with the Census by name, most were unclear about the roles and functions of the decennial census. The lack of knowledge and comprehension about the decennial census among respondents in this study suggests that this in itself may be a contributing factor for decennial census noncompliance among young adult respondents.

Although the U.S. Census Bureau is positioned positively on the Generation X scale of cynicism, the Census Bureau is not exempt from scrutiny when the topic is data confidentiality. The same lack of confidence that GenXers have towards government civic engagement endeavors (not viewed as the best way for GenXers to impact community or have their voices heard) is the same lack of faith that GenXers have in how the government really treats and protects personal information. Seventy four percent of our total respondent group was skeptical about the protection of Title 13 data. The most disbelieving respondent groups in this study were Southeast Asians and American Indians.

Family (including family values and family relationships) is seen as the most important social institution among this age cohort; family seems to represent the most stable sense of community for Generation X respondents.

Religious activities were extremely important among all respondent groups in this study with the exception of non-Hispanic White Generation X respondents (a small percentage of the respondents in this study). For non-citizen immigrant respondents in our study, the church and its parishioners represent their *'local'* community.

4.3 Mobile Populations

Key Findings

Arizona Snowbirds, San Franciscan American Indians and urban gang members displayed high residential mobility. According to the ethnographers who conducted the fieldwork many members of these subpopulations may be hard to contact through traditional enumeration methods (i.e., in person or by mail). Others, like the homeless in San Francisco, may have difficulty providing a specific place of usual residence. The ethnographers also noted that although many study participants were aware of the census residence rules they did not find these rules helpful in reporting their own usual residence.

Most Irish Travelers, American Indians and gang members displayed distrust and fear of the government. This ethnography identified two related reasons for why there was reluctance to provide the Census Bureau with personal information. The first is applicable to persons who engage in unconventional activities. This can range from the violation of a civil or criminal law to involvement in living arrangements that violate either public or private housing rules. Underlying this phenomenon is the fear that information provided to the Census Bureau are not kept confidential by the agency and that divulging such information may result in some penalty or prosecution if it feel into the wrong hands. The second and related reason for the reluctance to provide personal information in the census is a broader sense of distrust in government coupled with the unwillingness to provide personal information to an entity whose intentions are questioned. This distrust and fear can lead to non-response and a lack of cooperation with enumerators.

Most American Indian households who participated in this ethnographic research were in flux, with residents changing from week to week. The ethnographers found that non-resident “guests in these households, however long their stay, are not likely to be enumerated as household members. These people, who have no other permanent residence, are likely to be missed by census efforts. The reason for the likely exclusion of these tenuous household members from the census roster include respondents' difficulty in apply census residence rules and, in some cases, violation of housing rules and distrust in government.

The ethnography of mobile populations found that, particularly for Irish Travelers and urban gang members who participated in the study, disinterest was a large factor in their lack of participation in the census. The Census Bureau's extensive outreach effort did not resonate for these mobile groups. Either they were not exposed to the campaign or they chose not to listen to it or believe the claims made in it. Consequently, some members of these communities did not understand why the census is necessary nor did they understand the process. The result in many cases was non-participation in the census.

The ethnography of urban gang members found that this group was not reached by the census. That is, most were not aware of the messages put forth in the census outreach and promotion

efforts, most did not see the value of participating in the census, and, according to the ethnographer who conducted the fieldwork, most were not enumerated in Census 2000. Most members of the gang community do not read newspapers or watch news on television. Other means of advertising must be used to reach them. Advertising in places that hard-to-enumerate individuals are likely to frequent on a regular basis, such as supermarkets and laundromats, would be useful in reaching low-income women.

Based on fieldwork conducted by the ethnographer it is apparent that the Census Bureau's outreach and promotion strategies did not increase census awareness or the desire to participants in Census 2000 among the Georgia Travelers in the study. Not providing full and complete information on the census form was also a problem, according to the ethnographer this might be because they felt that giving some information on their households satisfied their duty. It is important to emphasize that all household members should be listed and that every American be counted, even those with no permanent residence.

However, the ethnographer who conducted the fieldwork did report some good news. For example, the ethnographer who studied the Irish Travelers reported an optimistic outlook towards future data collection with this subpopulation. Her research indicates that respondents found the census form easy to understand, and the dates of the enumeration period were during the time when the Travelers are usually at their regular residence. Thus, if the problem of disinterest can be resolved within the Traveler population, they are likely to participate in the census.

Similarly, Arizona Snowbirds were willing to participate in the census. According to the ethnographer they just needed some assistance with the residence rules and with obtaining the forms (since many lacked a formal mailing address). The residence rules for transients need to be clearly presented on the form, or in publications that are sent to the relevant populations. For instance, residence rules state “People without a usual residence, however, will be counted where they are staying on Census Day” (U.S. Census Bureau, 1999). This should be made clear to those populations likely to house transient people and to those who claim no permanent residence. Distribution of materials should also be increased to include more sites of different types. It is also important to make sure that all undeveloped and public land campsites are designated for enumeration.

According to the ethnographers, the involvement of community organizations in the efforts of the Census Bureau was particularly effective for some groups. Specifically, ethnographic data indicate that the urban American Indian population and the Traveler population benefitted from local community residents promoting the census. Therefore, continued and increased use of community-based organizations is high on the list of recommendations for 2010 Census. All of the ethnographers also recommended enlisting the aid of members of groups that are difficult to enumerate. If members of the community could be hired as enumerators, some of the issues of distrust would be alleviated.

4.4 Complex Households and Relationships

Key Findings

There were five major themes that ran through the six complex household studies of race/ethnic groups: 1) conceptual differences in the definition and application of our key census concept, "household," 2) cultural, linguistic, and nationality differences with census concepts, methods, and procedures; 3) issues with the relationship question and the household type variable; 4) mobility patterns and respondents' conceptions of who is a household member that may not match our central concept of "usual residence;" and 5) fear and mistrust of the government and confidentiality pledges.

The first theme identified across these studies was that conceptual differences in the definition and application of the key concept, "household," could potentially result in differential coverage errors. In the census definition of "household," physical structure is the key variable: a household is basically defined as all of the people sharing one housing unit. As a result, the number of households in census data products equals the number of occupied housing units. A theme that ran through the Navajo, Inupiaq, and African American ethnographic studies was that the extent and depth of social interaction is more important than shared physical structure in how respondents defined "household." Emotional closeness and sharing of domestic functions–earning and pooling income, sharing subsistence tasks, cooking and eating together, and caring for children–were the criteria used by respondents in deciding who is a member of their household, regardless of whether they coreside in the same physical structure.

Ethnographers who conducted the fieldwork documented cases of "households without walls" where respondents listed people from more than one housing unit on their census forms as well as the converse: people sharing the same housing unit who consider themselves to be separate households and wanted to complete separate census forms. The implication of this finding is that respondents are likely to use their own culturally-defined criteria to decide who to list on their census forms and may ignore, or not even read, the residence rules specifying who should and should not be counted. This may be a factor in differential coverage errors by race/ethnic groups.

The second theme running through the component studies is that there are cultural, linguistic, and nationality differences with census concepts, methods, and procedures. Two examples are given:

The first example of cultural and linguistic differences concerns Latino naming customs that differ from those of the wider U.S. society. Latinos have two last names–the last name of one's father and the last name of one's mother. Married women may also add their husband's last names after these surnames, preceded by "de." The problem is that the last name line on the census form may not have enough spaces for Latinos to write in more than one surname completely, and they may not record their names exactly the same way from one data collection to another (such as on a census form and later on a reinterview form): writing one name or more

than one, leaving a space or not between names, or truncating a name. The implication is that if Latino respondents are not consistent in recording last names from one data collection to another, the number of matches for Latinos for coverage studies may be reduced relative to the number of matches for other groups. This could result in possible understating of undercoverage for Latinos.

The second example is the Inupiaq Eskimo cultural tradition of informally or formally adopting their own grandchildren, which is common in other societies as well. About 40percent of the Inupiaq households included in this study had informally or formally adopted their grandchildren. For these respondents, both "grandchild" and "adopted child" on the census form could be checked, showing that our census relationship categories are not always mutually exclusive, as is commonly assumed. If grandchild is chosen, the household would be classified as a grandparent-maintained, skip-generation household. However, if adopted child is marked, the same household could be classified as just a two generation household consisting of parents and adopted children, leading to underreporting of multi-generational grandparent-maintained households in our data for the Inupiat. The number of grandparent-maintained households is of interest to researchers seeking to understand the effects of welfare reform.

A third example of cultural, linguistic and nationality differences affecting census concepts, methods, and procedures is that "foster child" and "adopted child" are culture-bound relationship terms embedded in specific U.S. socio-legal institutions that do not exist in the countries of origin of some of the Latino and Korean immigrants in this study, leading to confusion and misreporting by some immigrants from these groups.

The third major theme running through the six ethnographic studies was issues with the relationship question and the household type variable. Three types of issues were identified in the Complex Households report (method in collecting household relationships, stand alone response categories and inconsistent variables on the census form) but one example is discussed in this report. The first type of issue results from the method used in most censuses and surveys to collect household relationships: collecting relationships just to Person one on the census form. Reckoning relationships just to Person one can lead to masking of interrelationships of other persons in the household and may change the classification of household type. One primary example of masking of interrelationships due to reckoning relationships from Person one only is the case of a household comprised of a woman, her child, and her unmarried partner. If she is listed as Person one on the form, the child's relationship to her is recorded, resulting in the classification: female householder family household. If her partner is listed as Person one, both she and her child are recorded as nonrelatives to him, resulting this time in the classification of the same household as a: male householder nonfamily household. Thus, inconsistencies in the two critical dimensions of classifying household type–sex of householder and family/nonfamily status–can occur, depending on who in these types of households is listed as Person one. Inconsistencies like this could skew the distribution of household types and may have impact on distribution of funds to federal programs, counts of persons in poverty, and other programs and policies.

The fourth general theme running through all of the ethnographic studies is that mobility patterns and conceptions of who is a household member may not fit our central concept of "usual residence," used to determine where persons should be counted in the census. Examples of long-distance mobility for temporary work and subsistence activities (Navajo and Inupiat), seasonal mobility (rural whites, Inupiat), cross-national cyclic mobility (Latino) and permanent immigration (Koreans), cyclic mobility of children (Navajo, Inupiat, rural whites) and elderly persons (Navajo and African Americans), sporadic movement of the tenuously attached among households (African Americans), and ad hoc moves of indeterminate length for caregiving (whites and Inupiat) are identified and their implications for our residence rules and for coverage are addressed.

The final major theme running through the Navajo, African American, and Korean and Latino immigrant studies was fear and mistrust of the government and its confidentiality pledges. Fear of losing benefits or leases, being deported, or having one's data misused were factors that may lead to differential participation in the census and undercounting, which we discovered in 2000 we cannot fully measure due to correlation bias.

4.5 Social Network Tracing

Key Findings

The character of individuals' mobility correlated with the number of moves they made and the number of domiciles they occupied during the six month study. A significant number of the highly and habitually mobile had lived in a distant place five years before. Most of the habitually mobile were adult males; the few mobile adult females and youth intermittently resided with highly mobile adult men. More adult women and young children were sedentary.

Proportionately more individuals found in the census were sedentary than were residentially or habitually mobile. As long as their domiciles had been listed and correctly enumerated in Census 2000, sedentary "non-movers" were generally found to have been enumerated. Non-movers were missed, however, if their whole household had been omitted, either in listed or unlisted housing. The enumeration outcomes of individuals characterized as residentially mobile, who made incidental moves, took trips, or regularly shuttled between one home and work locations, were largely determined by whether the census respondents expected the individuals to return (if absent) or to stay long term (if present at the time of enumeration).

Respondents' interpretations of individuals' mobility seemed to determine whether or not they were reported in households. Trips away, even for short periods, could condition views. What seemed to determine whether respondents reported absent individuals was whether the respondents expected them to return. Several respondents did not mention mobile individuals

who had histories of appearing and disappearing and who were traced in and out of their census residence households, apparently because respondents did not expect them to stay long term. Respondents' expectations about individuals' mobility led to erroneous enumerations and omissions. A son absent at the time of the Census and for months before and after out of the country who was expected back was included in his family household. A son who had recently turned up after an absence of years who was expected to move on was excluded from his. Contrasting expectations affected some absent breadwinners. One absent adult male temporarily working away was named as a resident of his mother's household and his wife's in different locations. A house-owner temporarily working away was omitted by the house sitter who answered the census.

Most of the habitually mobile who were found enumerated had certain traits in common: their census residences had been in conventional housing, and they repeatedly and routinely returned to the same set of residentially sedentary co-residents in one locality. More habitually and residentially mobile people who lacked any one of these traits were omitted than were found enumerated. In contrast, most the habitually mobile who were not found enumerated did not have census residences in conventional housing. The majority of the omitted habitually mobile occupied a series of domiciles in transient quarters, commercial accommodations, and other domiciles that Census 2000 did not list as units of enumeration.

More residentially and habitually mobile people (who changed their domicile at least once or more frequently during the six-month study) were omitted than were found enumerated. The ratio was 71 omitted to 60 enumerated. Far more people who changed domiciles at least once were omitted than were erroneously enumerated; this ratio was 71 to 2.

The immediate reason why whole households were omitted was their unit was missed. The most commonly omitted types of census residences were domiciles that are not in conventional housing. In so far as frequent changes of domiciles and occupancy of irregular housing, non-conventional housing, transient quarters, and commercial accomodations are related to poverty, no considering or defining the kinds of domiciles that low income, highly mobile people occupy as Census units of enumeration connects the behaviors of mobility to almost systematic omission in the census.

Participants in the social networks shared certain social identities which the Census treats as demographic characteristics. One social network consisted of participants who strongly identified with their Mexican origin or heritage and spoke Spanish among themselves (Chavira-Prado 2001). Another social network was made up entirely of Haitians who spoke Creole and formed migrant farm workers crews. Co-affiliation with certain social identities functioned at the boundary of each social network as a whole. Individuals linked in cohesive sub-groups within the social networks shared co-affiliation with other demographic characteristics, such as range of age or employment status.

For example, all participants in the social network of the Haitian seasonal and migrant farm work crews spoke Haitian creole and identified socially and culturally as Haitians; all participants and co-residents in the Midwest network identified themselves as Mexicans and spoke Spanish. The social networks were nevertheless sub-groups within such broad categories. Their common current occupation and co-location in a base community further united the Haitian social network. The particular Midwest Mexicans purposefully formed a folkloric dance group. Participants in the American Indian men's society were all male and all identified with their Indian heritage, yet their affiliation in the society and engagement in its activities overarched identification with discrete tribes or families and set them apart within Indian country. Similarly, although most in the social network and residential matrix of commercial fishermen would classify themselves as white and U.S. born, some were not, and what brought them together was an economic dependence on fishing.

Interactions in five of the six interacting social networks resulted in participants' engaging in episodes of co-residence. (In the sixth, all participants lived under the same roof.) These episodes were mainly short (a day or two) or medium (a few weeks) term, although some participants who began co-residing during the six months were still living together when the study ended. Several stable co-residents moved together place to place. Co-residents over the longest terms or repeatedly were predominantly related by kinship. The duration of stays in particular domiciles were circumscribed by influences outside social network interactions. Anti-squatting rules established how long campers could stay in a campground. Fishermen had to go work at sea. Employees had to cut trips short to get back to jobs, and so on.

The social identities of the unenumerated included people of various ages, ethnic affiliations, occupations and language preferences. The immediate reasons why none of the survival campers was enumerated and none of the seasonal workers staying in a dorm was enumerated have nothing to do with their "race" rather the condition of living in domiciles that were not listed or enumerated in Census 2000.

4.6 Barriers to Enumeration in Colonias

Key Findings

Although colonias on the U.S./Mexico border are, for the most part, ethnically homogeneous there is consensus among ethnographers that it is inappropriate to assume the same degree of homogeneity on other key dimensions such as knowledge of English, the extent of social cohesion (i.e. community) among colonia residents and the level of infrastructure development.

Ethnographers from all four colonias or sites identified and documented the presence of four major barriers to census enumeration. These are: irregular housing, little or no knowledge of English and limited formal education, concerns regarding confidentiality, and complex and fluid households. However, the extent to which these barriers posed problems for Census 2000

enumeration and the Census Bureau's success in dealing with these obstacles varied across the four colonias.

Irregular housing[7] appeared to be an obstacle in all four colonias. However, ethnographic observations revealed that for the most part census enumerators were able to successfully negotiate the obstacles presented by irregular housing. Ethnographic data reveal that this is especially the case in the colonia in El Paso County where cultural facilitators were used and where update/enumerate procedures were implemented. Focus groups with census enumerators and crew leaders who were assigned to the colonia in El Paso County corroborate this ethnographic finding.

Limited reading skills and little or no knowledge of English was cited as an obstacle to enumeration in all four colonias. Regardless of site, the need for a Spanish language census form that can be easily administered by enumerators and readily understood by respondents was documented by all ethnographers with specific examples of how the absence of these forms made enumeration difficult. For the most part, the Spanish language guide had limited use, and in-depth interviews revealed that respondents did not successfully use the 1-800 number to request Spanish language census forms. These findings from the ethnographic fieldwork were echoed in focus groups with census enumerators and crew leaders.

All ethnographers reported that colonia residents expressed concerns regarding the confidentiality of census data. Lack of trust in government and leeriness of non colonia residents prevailed across all four sites. However, it appears that, for the most part, these concerns were counterbalanced by Census Bureau efforts to promote Census 2000 via Spanish language media. According to ethnographic accounts these efforts by the Census Bureau were very well received in all four colonias. All ethnographers claim that Census Bureau outreach efforts targeted at Spanish speakers contributed to the success of Census 2000. This finding was substantiated by data from focus groups with census enumerators and crew leaders.

Complex households and households with mobile and ambiguous members were prevalent in all four colonias. However, this situation was particularly pronounced in the colonia situated in Riverside County because of the sizeable number of migrant workers. While this report cannot make definitive statements about coverage, it appears, based on ethnographic observations, that census enumerators were for the most part successful in identifying members residing in these complex and highly mobile households. Focus groups with Census Bureau enumerators and crew leaders also suggest that these tenuous household members were identified on the form. This

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[7] Irregular housing refers to housing units that have one or more of the following characteristics: (a) hidden from public view, usually in back yards or down rural roads, (b) illegally built usually in single family homes or garages, (c) do not have clear unit designators such as apartment number or any other clear marker such as house number in rural areas, or (d) are in areas where the condition and number of units in buildings vary inconsistently. (de la Puente, 1993, page

success can be largely attributed to the persistence of census enumerators and the Census Bureau's promotion efforts targeted at Spanish speakers.

5. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Each of the full ethnographic reports provides additional recommendations intended to help with the planning efforts of the 2010 Census.

5.1 Protecting Privacy Ethnographic Research

5.1.1 Implications of Protecting Privacy Ethnographic Research

This research can inform the development of motivational and explanatory materials for the decennial census and will assist in the training of interviewers in dealing with privacy concerns. Information provided by the ethnography on protecting privacy can also illuminates our understanding of how concerns regarding the protection of personal privacy operates in the context of a decennial census by providing insight into why respondents are selective in the information they are willing to provide the census. Information generated by this research can be used to improve the design of questions to gather data on sensitive topics and help minimize non-response to these questions.

These implications are reflected in the recommendations that follow.

5.1.2 Recommendations from Protecting Privacy Ethnographic Research

Recommendations are offered in two areas: decennial language policy and outreach efforts/educational campaigns.

5.1.2.1. Decennial Language Policy Recommendations

- Because privacy judgments are situational, it is not possible to create a list of items that will always or never be considered private. Statement reassuring the privacy of the information provided must be tailored to the specific data collection effort and the target population.

- Through media coverage of other agencies and organizations, respondents are very likely to be aware that fraud may occur through the action of individual Census Bureau employees. The Census Bureau should describe its internal controls on the handling of data in explanations of confidentiality to respondents.

- Because respondents' comfort with questions rests on their assessment of the sponsor's legitimate right to know the information requested, the Census Bureau should make every

effort to provide good, understandable explanations of why these data are needed and how they will be used.

5.1.2.2. Recommendations To Improve Decennial Outreach Efforts and Educational Campaigns

- Include the idea of having one's "voice" heard in motivational material for minority groups.

5.2 Generation X

5.2.1 Implications of Generation X Ethnographic Research

Gaining a better understanding of the beliefs and values of the Generation X cohort makes sense given that this cohort will constitute a sizeable respondent pool for 2010 Census. Although values and beliefs can change over time and with an increase in age and maturity, it is nonetheless useful to get insight into the current civic belief and civic value system of this cohort with special focus on participation in the decennial census. A better understanding of this area can help inform planning for the following critical census objectives: reducing survey nonresponse, managing trust and privacy issues, motivational advertising and publicity campaigns, and effective educational outreach materials.

Below are recommendations directed at these essential activities that came out of the Generation X ethnography.

5.2.2 Recommendations from Generation X Ethnographic Research

5.2.2.1. Recommendations to Decrease Decennial Census Nonresponse and Respondent Coverage

- This research suggests that the Census Bureau should continue to partner with church (or other places of worship) and faith-based organizations to reach special population groups, especially immigrants. The Census Bureau should recruit and hire church youth groups for outreach and enumeration work. Church members are familiar with their communities and the enumeration mission of the Census, and in many instances they are bilingual (i.e. Spanish and English; Creole and English). Church youth group members hold great promise as census outreach specialists and census enumerators. They are typically local residents, bilingual and bicultural in many instances, and care about getting involved and improving conditions in their communities. Additionally, members of the church youth groups are in positions to reach out to hard-to-reach populations, such as

gangs and undocumented workers, who are at a high risk of not being included in Census surveys.

5.2.2.2. Decennial Language Policy Recommendations

- It is apparent that further research is needed to determine if the Census Bureau should only emphasize the distinction between citizens and non-citizens in its advertisements and outreach efforts to various respondent groups. For instance, the 2000 decennial census posters, commercial announcements, billboards and other advertisements emphasized the distinction between citizens and non-citizens with regards to Title 13 data. However, the Generation X ethnography strongly indicates that 2010 decennial census posters, commercial announcements, billboards and ads should also emphasize that personal information is confidential for documented and undocumented residents as well. Specifically using the term "undocumented" in future advertisements may relay a clearer message to a group of respondents who are apprehensive towards the government that their participation in the decennial census is crucial. The terminology that the U.S. Census Bureau uses to target various immigrant populations is important. Further pretesting research is needed to determine the most effective terminology to use in marketing decennial census participation.

5.2.2.3. Recommendations to Improve Decennial Outreach Efforts and Educational Campaigns

- This research suggests that the Census Bureau may be more effective at reaching the Generation X cohort if it downplays the national nature of the Census and emphasizes making a difference through Census participation in one's local community without over promising benefits.

- Stress benefits of the decennial census to families; promote the Census as a family activity that will also help one's ethnic community.

- The Census Bureau should consider working collaboratively with Immigration and Naturalization Services to incorporate one or two decennial census questions on the Naturalization Civics Exam sponsored by the Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Services. All applicants are required to pass this exam before being considered eligible for American naturalization. According to 1996 Immigration and Naturalization Services estimates (the most current and publicly available data), 1,044,689 persons are naturalized in the United States annually. The top ten countries for persons naturalized as American citizens according to 1996 Immigration and Naturalization Services estimates are from Mexico, Cuba, Vietnam, the Philippines, the Former Soviet Union, El Salvador, China, India, the Dominican Republic and Columbia. The top three countries that produce American naturalized citizens are also respondents included in the Generation X ethnography.

- The Study Guide to the Naturalization Civics Exam would be an ideal venue that the Census Bureau can utilize to educate a segment of the immigrant population about the historical role and national function of the decennial census. Decennial census questions that could be included on this exam (e.g. What is the U.S. Decennial Census? Name one purpose of the U.S. Decennial Census.) could increase knowledge and familiarity about the decennial census that many newly arrived immigrants often lack.

- The importance of Census survey data to community development and federal educational allocations should be stressed to GenX respondents to inspire decennial census compliance. Just as the lottery system has a slogan, *you can't win if you don't play*; and the Census 2000 had a slogan, *This is your future. Don't leave it blank.* The Census Bureau could create a new slogan for the 2010 Census that would appeal to GenX respondents: *Be counted in your community so that you can count on your community. Return your 2010 Census form today* (Crowley 2001).

5.3 Mobile Populations Ethnographic Research

5.3.1 Implications of Mobile Populations Ethnographic Research

From the perspective of the transients, enumeration procedures have not been adequately tailored to their circumstances. The chief obstacle of this has been the lack of accurate current information about the characteristics and behaviors of the known mobile groups that is necessary to apply more successful enumeration methods. Mobile groups share in common the lack of awareness of the purposes of the census, deep distrust of the government and its information gathering strategies, and a lifestyle that very easily allows them to slip through the census operations.

The ethnography of selected mobile population groups provided insight on the following four transient groups: urban gang members, Irish Travelers in Mississippi and Georgia, seasonal residents or "snowbirds" in Arizona, and American Indians residing in the San Francisco Bay Area. This research served to generate suggestions for how to best tailor census enumeration methods to highly mobile population groups.

Many and varied recommendations were offered by ethnographers in their reports. A full set of these recommendations are provided in the Census Bureau's Final Report. Below is a selective account of the most useful suggestions.

5.3.2 Recommendations from Mobile Populations Ethnographic Research

5.3.2.1. Recommendations to Improve Decennial Outreach Efforts and Educational Campaigns

- A feature of Census 2000 that all ethnographers found appealing and valuable was the use of community organizations to promote census awareness and encourage census participation. Therefore, continued and increased use of community-based organizations is high on the list of recommendations for 2010 Census. Specific community organizations mentioned by the ethnographers include: churches, schools, and American Indian and tribal organizations.

5.3.2.2. Recommendations to Decrease Decennial Census Nonresponse and Respondent Coverage

- All ethnographers recommended enlisting the aid of members of groups that are difficult to enumerate. If members of the community could be hired as enumerators, some of the issues of distrust would be alleviated.[8]

- Along the same lines, enlisting aid of key community members (e.g. the clergy, community activists, and school officials) to promote census awareness and participation would be very beneficial. For example, in urban Indian communities there are key households, which often house highly respected members of the community and serve as meeting places. These households could provide instrumental connections to the community and offer a way to gain the trust of the people.

5.4 Complex Households and Relationships Ethnographic Research

5.4.1 Implications of Complex Households and Relationships Ethnographic Research

This ethnography provided analytic insights for understanding the changing context of American household formation and rich information on how people of different ethnic groups actually interpret and use relationship categories. The findings can be used to modify and improve census methods, questions, relationship categories and household composition topologies to better describe the emerging diversity of household types in the United States. The significance of this information is reflected in the recommendations generated by this research.

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[8] For example, the ethnographer who conducted the research of urban gang members indicated that that while it would not be wise to enlist gang members (who are often criminals) to work for the Census, members of the community of the same race and socioeconomic class might be more likely to be trusted than white, middle class males.

The final report of this ethnographic research provided specific recommendations in the following five areas: revisions to and pretesting of the relationship question; new research on the relationship question and household type; language and translation issues; outreach and training; and new ethnographic research related to coverage. A few are provided below.

5.4.2 Recommendations from Complex Households and Relationships Ethnographic Research

5.4.2.1. Decennial Short-Form Content, Wording, and Testing Recommendations

- Modify the relationship question on the census form by expanding the number and precision of its response categories to reflect the growing cultural diversity in the country and its varied household composition. Add response categories for lateral and lineal kin–nephew/niece, uncle/aunt, brother-in-law/sister-in-law, cousin, and grandparent–and a child of unmarried partner. Conduct cognitive testing of the expanded question and categories. Conduct a split-panel test of three versions of the relationship question–the Census 2000 question, the ACS question, and the experimental question and categories recommended here (this recommendation was approved in the summer of 2002 for testing in the 2005 content test).

- Develop and cognitively test an individual-level question to identify all interrelationships in the household (already in use in the 2001 Census in England). If it performs well enough, consider including it in a panel of the 2005 content test.

- Both qualitative and quantitative research is also needed on marital status to assess how accurately our "husband/wife" and "unmarried partner" categories differentiate married couple from other household types.

5.4.2.2. Decennial Language Policy Recommendations

- Increase the scope and size of language and translation projects to identify linguistic, cultural, cognitive, and methodological issues in developing foreign language forms.

5.4.2.3. Recommendations To Improve Decennial Outreach Efforts and Educational Campaigns

- In addition to these recommendations specific to the way in which the census asks for relationship of household members, the complex household ethnography also generated recommendations for outreach and training pertinent to the American Indian and Alaska Native populations. The research indicated that it would be beneficial to have special enumerator training modules for American Indian reservations and in Alaska Native areas that identify cultural factors that may affect how respondents interpret and answer census questions. It appears that some respondents from these population groups needed instructions on how to "translate" their answers into the appropriate Census Bureau

categories. Because of this apparent need, the final report also recommends the conduct of ethnographic research in specific American Indian and Alaska Native tribal areas to identify cultural-specific factors that may affect the quality and comparability of data with other ethnic groups. This research would be useful for the development of enumerator training guidelines to address these factors, as part of 2010 Census research and development.

5.4.2.4. Recommendations for New Ethnographic Research Related to Coverage

- Plan and conduct a new ethnographic study in the 2004 census site test in Queens, New York on Coverage, Residence Rules, and Household Composition by race/ethnicity. The Queens site was selected largely for its race/ethnic diversity, particularly of Hispanics and Asians. A coverage followup study is planned and behavior coding of responses to the residence rules will be done. An ethnographic study including Hispanics and Asians nicely fits both the test site and the objectives of the test.

- Plan and conduct a qualitative study in conjunction with the 2004 census site test in Queens, New York, to identify and assess factors contributing to nonresponse and correlation bias for different race/ethnic and age groups.

5.5 Social Network Tracing Ethnographic Research

5.5.1 Implications of Social Network Tracing Ethnographic Research

This research traced highly mobile people's moves among domiciles to learn more about how mobility affected coverage in Census 2000. Mobility confounds the effort to enumerate each person at one (and only one) "Census Day" residence.[9] For Census coverage measurement methods based on sample areas, reliable methods to determine whether people who moved into or out were omitted or correctly enumerated have proven difficult to implement. The mobility of the American population challenges census and coverage measurement methods.

The research methods applied in this project were better able to reliably identify (and re-identify) people from their position in social networks through careful fieldwork (interactions and transactions with others) than by comparing sets of address and person records. Links between two or more individuals, whether in households, localities, or places of employment provide multiple pointers to the same individual which can be

[9] See Census 2000 "Residence Rules" available on line at: ***http://www.census.gov/population/www/censusdata/resid_rules.html***

more redundant and more reliable than mere matching of names and personal characteristics.

The most immediately promising social network for Decennial concerns is the small scale social network formed by household (or Group Quarters) residents. Taking person records found enumerated together into account results in more confident matches and more confident automated identification of duplicated persons. Each of the two or more person records found enumerated together provides an alternative to using address in matching. This helps surmount the problem of identification of whole and partial households duplicated at different addresses or at units of enumeration erroneously listed more than once. Person records enumerated together can be treated like item attributes of each other.

5.5.2 Recommendations from Social Network Tracing Ethnographic Research

- Consider adapting census methods to more closely fit the cultural habits of distinct populations, including the traditionally, seasonally, and occupationally mobile.

- Design and test the feasibility of Census operations appropriate for the contemporary patterns of mobility in the United States, including transnational migration.

- For the existing categories of census units of enumeration, continue to improve the Master Address File, the listing of housing units, Group Quarters, and Service-Based Sites, as well as Census Bureau geographical programs and electronic maps.

- To include the under covered Transient Quarters, work quarters, and types of residential accommodations that were unrecognized or excluded by definition as units of enumeration in Census 2000, it will be necessary to develop and test methods to expand the listings and develop more inclusive enumeration operations for types of domiciles that are often the default census residences of mobile people (among others).

- Consider seasonal differences in the distribution of the population of the United States when estimating population, and consider the development of the capacity to measure seasonal differences in the distribution of the population.

5.6 Enumeration Barriers in Colonias Ethnographic Research

5.6.1 Implications of Enumeration Barriers in Colonias Ethnographic Research

Colonias are generally unincorporated and low income residential subdivisions, lacking basic infrastructure and services along the border between the U.S. and Mexico. These settlements have been in existence for decades, but the exodus of the poor to colonias began in full force during the 1980s and 1990s (Chapa and del Pinal, 1993).

The ethnographic study of colonias relied on data provided by experienced ethnographers in their field reports to identify and describe barriers to the census enumeration of colonia residents. The research also relied on the views and opinions regarding the conduct of Census 2000 obtained from census enumerators and crew leaders whose assignment areas included one of the four colonias studied by the ethnographers. This information was collected through focus groups conducted by staff from SRD and PRED.

5.6.2 Recommendations from Enumeration Barriers in Colonias Ethnographic Research

5.6.2.1. Recommendations to Improve Decennial Outreach Efforts and Educational Campaigns

- The colonia ethnography suggests that the Census Bureau should build on the successful efforts employed during Census 2000 in the El Paso County colonia (Cotton) in the conduct of future censuses. That is, use cultural facilitators with local knowledge to work alongside census enumerators. Use this model in selected test sites before 2010 Census in order to better understand this approach and formalize it through the establishment of standardized training and procedures. These efforts will facilitate exporting this approach to communities along the U.S./Mexico border where irregular housing, limited knowledge of English, and suspicion of government and non-community members are prevalent.

- The Census Bureau should revise and augment the training used to train enumerators and crew leaders assigned to colonias to more appropriately address the concerns raised in the focus groups with census enumerators and crew leaders. For example, reduce the volume of paper and other materials distributed during the course of the training by digitizing much of this information and developing automated self-study modules. Train census enumerators who will be assigned to list/enumerate and nonresponse follow up in border communities to conduct interviews with respondents who are Spanish speakers and have little or no knowledge of English.

5.6.2.2. Decennial Language Policy Recommendations

- This research also indicates that we should learn from the experience of not making Spanish language census forms readily available in colonias and gain knowledge from not providing census enumerators with a Spanish language instrument that can be easily used. This research indicates that in border communities, such as the four discussed in this report, a Spanish language census form and a Spanish language data collection instrument for census enumerators can greatly facilitate the enumeration process. Conduct research on these approaches in selected test sites before 2010 Census in order to fine tune the ways in which this approach can be applied across all border communities, while taking into account the unique features and needs that some of these settlements have.

5.6.2.3. Recommendations to Improve Decennial Outreach Efforts and Educational Campaigns

- The authors recommend building on the apparent success of the Spanish language Census 2000 outreach and promotion campaign. Further research to examine one of the key messages of this campaign should be conducted, namely that participating in Census 2000 will benefit your community. While this message appears to have been effective in Census 2000 in the four border communities discussed in this report, ethnographers who conducted the fieldwork expressed concern that if improvements in community infrastructure do not follow Census 2000 the Census Bureau will find it very challenging to repeat its success in outreach and promotion in future censuses. Conduct further research to develop new messages that will motivate border community residents to participate in 2010 Census without the risk of raising expectations.

6. DISCUSSION

The ethnographic research summarized in this report focused on distinct subpopulations and on specific long-standing issues that make census-taking a challenge. This report summarized major findings and provided suggestions or recommendations that have emerged from the ethnographic research conducted during Census 2000.

While many insights have been offered by this research, a key general insight that cuts across all six ethnographies is that the census taking process in the United States is not a value-or culture-free enterprise. Census procedures, definitions, and concepts contain culturally (and to some extent class-based) specific assumptions that may not be shared and/or uniformly understood across all subpopulations. That is, census definitions and procedures are also based on assumptions about how people are expected to live based on norms of household structure in the overall population. Norms in the society change over time and across race/ethnic groups. While this may appear to be common knowledge, the implications of this assertion on how a census is conducted cannot be fully appreciated without the conduct of ethnographic research. This understanding and knowledge is essential if improvements in the way we conduct the census is to occur.

Perhaps the ethnographies of complex households, mobile populations, and colonias best showcase the presence of these culturally bound and class-bound assumptions. For example, the complex household ethnography research showed that the relationship categories used by the Census Bureau reflect the relationships in our society deemed most important to specifically delineate and the norms of household composition and that these change from census to census. The categories express relationships based on kinship, marriage, and cohabitation. They also reflect culture-bound economic ties (e.g., housemate, boarder) and socio-legal arrangements (e.g., adopted child, foster child) that may not be understood by immigrants from countries without such socio-legal institutions.

The way in which the Census Bureau currently views household arrangements is not relevant to growing selected segments of U.S. society. While this may not have been a salient issue in decades past, the complex household ethnography indicates that this may be of increasing importance in light of both the current and projected levels of racial, ethnic, and national origin diversity in this country. As a result of important demographic trends and structural and cultural changes documented by researchers within and outside the Census Bureau–continually increasing immigration; changing migration streams now coming primarily from Latin America and Asia; differential fertility rates; and increases in remarriages, blended families, cohabiting households, grandparent-maintained, and nonrelative households–it is clear this diversity will continue increasing. Population projections suggest that this diversity will continue increasing to the point that non-Hispanic whites will come to represent less than 50 percent of the U.S. population in the 2050s.

The ethnographies of mobile populations, social network tracing and colonias show that the assumption that people live in a single place and can most easily be contacted at easily identifiable addresses that are often implicit in Census Bureau procedures may not hold true for selected (and perhaps growing) segments of the U.S. population.

These ethnographies show that because the specific assumptions and values that underlie census practices and definitions are not shared uniformly across subpopulation groups and because these population subgroups are becoming larger and the number of such groups are increasing the enumeration of these subgroups have become more difficult.

Within the context of the Decennial Census, the difficulties in the enumeration of key subpopulations, which are rooted in a lack of shared assumptions between the census and the subpopulation in question, are interpreted as “barriers to enumeration."

The challenge for the Census Bureau is to obtain a better understanding of the sources of these "enumeration barriers" and use this knowledge to improve its enumeration process. Obviously this is very difficult given the scale and complexity of census taking in the United States. Aside from logistical matters, census taking in this country is intertwined with political and other interests. This adds to the challenge. It is within this mix of complex logistics and conflicting interests that the information and insight presented by this ethnographic research must be evaluated and used.

This series of ethnographies demonstrates another point about the effects of socio-cultural variation on the decennial Census and more general processes of data collection and coverage issues. These reports strongly suggest that structural factors, such as a groups' historical relationship with government, may be the source of widespread similarities between groups that are important influences on willingness to cooperate. Since these factors are related to complete avoidance of enumeration, they are not based in the particulars of Census concepts and procedures. For example, the ethnographies of privacy and Generation X both examine in detail the way that mistrust of government, based in history and social class, influence basic attitudes towards enumeration. The Complex Household report provides brief case studies from the Korean, Latino, African American, and Navajo centering around mistrust of the government and its impact on willingness to participate in the research, to complete a census form, and whether or not to provide complete and accurate information on all persons in the household. Qualitative information in these reports identifying and assessing factors affecting response rates and data accuracy and completeness in race/ethnic populations can be very helpful to the Census Bureau in its continuous efforts to understand the root causes of differential undercounts of minority and other subpopulations.

Another point demonstrated by the ethnographies of privacy and Generation X is that ethnic variation may not be the only source of relevant cultural influences on the Census. First, they demonstrate that even widely held belief systems about politics, about social commitment, and

about privacy, may not match with Census expectations. Thus, the beliefs and practices of middle class and mainstream groups are relevant and worthy of additional ethnographic study.

Second, other sources of variation beyond ethnicity may be relevant as well. The ethnography of privacy found variation in belief and attitude based on technological sophistication of respondents, and the ethnography of Generation X found age and class-related correlates of belief. In fact, these reports highlight significant similarities across ethnic boundaries in attitude and perception of the decennial census.

The six very diverse studies and the rich findings summarized here–on privacy, complex households, Generation X and civic engagement, mobile populations, colonias, and social network tracing of highly mobile people–demonstrate the wide scope of topics targeted to Census Bureau needs that can be fruitfully examined with ethnographic methods. Recommendations from these studies apply to specific areas of long-term census concern–causes and consequences of nonresponse and differential coverage errors; conceptual, linguistic, and methodological issues with question wording, sequencing, and forms design; training and outreach–and lead to new insights and hypotheses for future qualitative and quantitative research. Some of the recommendations presented here have already been given preliminary approval for inclusion in the 2010 census testing cycle, and others are under consideration.

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